

to sacrifice for something greater than ourselves in life. Once again, the children of this country believe in heroes, because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 3 years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America.

This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it and know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Georgia World Congress Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Alec Poitevint, chairman, Georgia Republican Party; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10).

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Termination of Emergency With Respect to Sierra Leone and Liberia *January 15, 2004*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 202(a) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order on January 15, 2004, that terminates the national emergency described and declared with respect to Sierra Leone in Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001, and expanded in scope with respect to Liberia by Executive Order 13213 of May 22, 2001.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order. This order becomes effective at

12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on January 16, 2004.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Recess Appointment of Charles W. Pickering as a United States Court of Appeals Circuit Judge *January 16, 2004*

Today I was proud to exercise my constitutional authority to appoint Judge Charles W. Pickering to serve on the

United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Judge Pickering has served with distinction as a United States District

Judge since he was unanimously confirmed by the Senate in 1990. He is highly qualified to serve on the Court of Appeals and has widespread bipartisan support from those who know him best.

For the past 2½ years, Judge Pickering has been waiting for an up-or-down vote in the Senate. A bipartisan majority of Senators supports his confirmation, and if he were given a vote, he would be confirmed. But a minority of Democratic Senators has been using unprecedented obstructionist tactics to prevent him and other qualified individuals from receiving up-or-down

votes. Their tactics are inconsistent with the Senate's constitutional responsibility and are hurting our judicial system.

As a result of today's recess appointment, Judge Pickering will fill a seat on the Fifth Circuit that has been designated a judicial emergency. He will perform a valuable service on a court that needs more judges to do its work with the efficiency the American people deserve and expect. Again I call on the Senate to stop playing politics with the American judicial system and to give my nominees the up-or-down votes they deserve.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process January 16, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2004, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 2003 (68 FR 3161).

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, as ex-

panded on August 20, 1998, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process and that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the economic sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.